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ART. I. — *The Progress of the Intellect, as exemplified in the Religious Development of the Greeks and Hebrews.*
By ROBERT WILLIAM MACKAY. London. 1850. 2 vols. 8vo.

A PROGRESS of the Intellect in matters of religion is certainly possible ; for the fact that there has been such a progress rests on the basis of historical evidence. But there cannot be progress to such an extent as to annihilate all positive fact and absolute truth, and render religion a purely subjective affair, or a mere process of unsubstantial and unsupported mental phenomena. Such a progress, having neither starting-point nor goal, would annul itself.

Whatever doctrine may be maintained on the subject of the genealogical unity of mankind, and whatever views may be adopted in regard to the existence and propagation of primeval traditions of an original divine revelation, certain it is, that facts of this kind lie in the unexplored recesses of an ante-historical period, and that the various historical nations have exhibited, from age to age, a progress of the intellect in their religious development, running parallel with their progress in other departments, and thus keeping pace with the advancing stages of general civilization. Therefore, on the hypothesis of a primeval revelation, we must suppose its traditionary light to have

grown more and more dim in the case of pagan nations, or where it was not embodied in an authentic written record, until it scarcely served any other purpose than to people the superstitious fancy with huge, indefinable, spectral images, and misshapen phantoms of popular fear; while the light of natural reason, gradually increasing in intensity and fulness, shone more and more brightly upon the objects of religious faith. Those fading traditions can have furnished only the rude and confused materials of the intellectual edifice. But whatever, and however necessary, such materials may have been, the history of the erection of the structure itself cannot but be replete with interest, especially in the case of the Greeks, among whom it attained, perhaps, its most perfect pagan development.

Such a history one might expect from the book before us; and such a history one will find therein, to some extent. After Creutzer's great work on the Symbolism and Mythology of the ancient nations, particularly of the Greeks, it is no very difficult task to give a tolerably good account of the religious development of this latter people; at least, within the mythological sphere, which Creutzer had marked out for himself. And how largely Mr. Mackay is indebted to his German predecessor for his materials and his ideas is sufficiently indicated by the fact, that, with so different a title, and one inviting apparently to so different a field of investigation and mode of treatment, he has followed Creutzer's track almost throughout in his *Progress of the Greek Intellect*, and given only some eighty pages in all to the development of the religious idea in Greek Philosophy. These pages, however, it must be confessed, though they could not be expected to contain any thing new, present a remarkably clear, concise, and satisfactory summary of this part of the subject.

Creutzer we regard as very high authority, and as, altogether, the most satisfactory philosophical writer on the subject of general Mythology. His work is remarkably free from extravagances and anti-Christian innuendoes, and, indeed, seems to have been written for the most part in an impartial and enlightened Christian spirit. Yet we are not prepared to swallow his system as a whole, or each of its separate details, with that childish confidence and

abandon, which, singularly yet naturally enough, are so often characteristic of a certain class of minds which would make amends for their infidelity in some directions by their credulity in others. What high symbolical meanings one might not evolve from any object whatever, taken at random, it is impossible to say before trial; especially when he who is to perform the work is possessed of a highly speculative and imaginative character; yet more, when he is indoctrinated in the mysteries of the transcendental and ideal philosophies; and most of all, when he is a German. There can be no reasonable doubt, we think, that Creutzer has attached a fund of significance to the several details of the ancient Mythologies which had never occurred to the mind of one in a thousand of those multitudes to whom those mythologies were as familiar as household words, and who received them as containing the symbols of their own religion. It is not probable, even, that any one, or even all, of the most enlightened Grecian philosophers could have developed from their own consciousness, or from that of their neighbors, the symbolism of their mythologies, with any thing like the ideal refinement and systematic fulness with which it is presented by Creutzer. Yet, for ourselves, we are not disposed to doubt that the symbolical ideas which Creutzer sets forth, or others of a similar kind, did really and practically, though quite indistinctly and unconsciously, lie at the foundation of the Greek Mythologies and Mysteries. Those ideas, if not the results of a primeval tradition, were a sort of instinctive or spontaneous growth of genial nature. But after all this modern exposition of them, we must not forget that, as a complete system of mythological interpretation, they had never come out to the clear consciousness of the ancient Greeks; had never entered their minds, indeed, except in a few rare cases, and then in a very fragmentary and disjointed way. We might as well take modern chemistry for an exponent of the state of chemical science among them, because it is developed out of materials with which they were familiar, and from ideas the elements of which had more or less distinctly occurred to the minds of some of their philosophers, as to take the results of Creutzer's *Symbolik* for a fair exponent of the actual religious sentiment and

consciousness of the earlier Greeks. It is true that something of the sort was more fully developed by the later philosophers, but only with the design of thereby rendering Paganism defensible against Christianity.

Moreover, at the risk of being charged with having no taste, no faculty of apprehension, in such matters — a charge which serves as an easy method to Creutzer himself and some others to get rid of a troublesome critic — we venture to think that he has made many of his representations of Greek Mythology confused, by bringing into immediate juxtaposition the various, and sometimes incongruous, fragmentary suggestions of the early poets and philosophers, the later interpretations of the expounders of the mysteries, the analogies of Oriental and Egyptian Symbolism, and finally the idealizing inferences of his own mind.

It is not our intention to review Creutzer. What we have meant to indicate is, that even he is not to be received with stupid veneration as a divine oracle; that he is to be used with one's eyes open and one's judgment awake, lest he should be misunderstood and thus abused; and finally, that he has his positive faults and defects. We have meant to say this, because we mean to say further, that Mr. Mackay, in treating this part of his subject, is, in our apprehension, guilty of the same faults, and in a much more aggravated degree. One rarely meets with such extreme feebleness of digestion and assimilation, joined with such an enormous appetite for accumulating materials. Take the following from his account of Hercules and Prometheus.

“The Persian beacon on the mountain top represented the rock-born divinity enshrined in his worthiest temple, and the funeral conflagration of Hercules was the sun dying in glory behind the western hills, as by a maritime people he would be made to sink to his repose, not behind his ‘Delphian rock,’ but beneath the waves in which he was observed to plunge. The scene of the decline and suffering of the deity was often the same which had been the witness of his living glory; and the pillar to which Prometheus was bound, like the stone of Sisyphus or tree of Peleus or Pentheus, was probably but a familiar emblem of the god converted into the instrument of his humiliation. It was the Hermetic pillar comprising so many symbolical meanings, at once the

rude block of infant sculpture and the heavenly axis supported by Atlas, the column of the palace of the Styx or the house of Dagon, or one of those sun obelisks called pillars of Seth, of Atlas, of Hercules, or of Dionysos, which were placed both in the East and West at the supposed limits of his course. In the contest of the sons of Aphareus with the Amyclæan Tyndaridæ, Idas, with a stone pillar belonging to his father's tomb, stuns for a time the immortal Pollux, until Zeus interposes to release him; Phocus is killed by the stone hurled by Peleus, Ares, and even Hercules, by that of Athene; Theseus descending to the infernal world is there chained to a stone until rescued by Hercules, and is finally hurled from a rock by Lycomedes. It is the stony oppression of winter's abeyance, the stone roofing of the Styx, the rock of Niobe which lives and weeps in summer, and the sword of Ægeus underneath it is the penetrating warmth softening the torpid ground, the same golden weapon borne by Perseus, and by Jemsheed, of which Peleus during his desolation was deprived, and which the legislator of Athens, the conqueror of the equinoctial Minotaur, is in his turn to recover and to wield;"—and so on and on, page after page. Vol. ii. pp. 86–88, &c.

Here is a hotch-potch of deities identified with the stones they throw at one another, and with the trees and pillars to which they are fastened for punishment, mixed up with suns and seasons, and swords and beacon-fires, let loose *pêle-mêle* in all the incongruous and inconsistent characters which could be got together by a dragnet from all the four quarters of the globe. We shall see further use to be made of these *God-stones* hereafter.

It is not our intention to enlarge in the way of strictures upon this part of Mr. Mackay's performance, or to dwell upon it in any point of view. We read it on the whole with satisfaction and edification, so far as the author confined himself to the subject in hand. But the book brings to view a subject far more momentous than Greek Mythology, and which is specifically treated under the head of the Religious Development of the Hebrews. This is a subject which Mr. Mackay himself must have felt to be his leading theme, and which he must have known would determine the character of what he wrote, in the eyes of most of his readers. That such is the fact is evident from the tone of the introductory chapters, from the frequent allusions to this subject in all parts of his book, and from what he knew was the state of public

opinion in regard to it among those who use the language in which the book is written. We here refer to the assumption on which we understand our author to proceed throughout; that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have no more claim to a divine origin or authority than the works of Orpheus, or Homer, or Hesiod, of Plato or Origen, of Confucius, Zoroaster, or Mahomet; and that positive Christianity is a mere vulgar prejudice and antiquated superstition.

In the presence of such an assumption as this, all nice disquisitions about the personages and the ideas of Greek Mythology, however beautiful, ingenious, or learned, though fortified by the most astonishing erudition of marginal references, and set forth with all the charms of poetry and eloquence, must nevertheless sink into absolute insignificance. The truth of the Christian Revelation, not only to all who believe it, but to all who have been instructed in its history and doctrines, is a matter of practical and infinite, of every-day and eternal, moment. It is no mere question of philosophic speculation. It is an affair of life and death. A man, therefore, who takes the ground of Mr. Mackay on this subject, must not expect Christian readers to become complacently absorbed in his learned and ingenious theorizing on pagan mythology, while he is all along, sometimes impliedly and by crafty insinuations, sometimes openly and by gross assaults, treating the objects of their dearest associations and holiest feelings with ridicule, odium, and blasphemy.

To obtain a right understanding of the point of view from which our author regards the Holy Scriptures and the Christian religion, it will be instructive to have before us some of his general philosophical and theological principles.

"Axioms," he says, "derive their seeming independent reality not from any priority to experience, but from the multiplicity and familiarity of the experiences supporting them." Vol. i. p. 28.

In support of this view he cites Mill's *Logic* and Herschel's *Discourse*. The citation of Herschel is second-hand, being made by Mill in the place referred to; and after all, it is very doubtful whether, when fairly interpreted, it supports Mackay's statement; in one point, at

least, it directly contradicts it. As for Mill, whose doctrines have furnished for many infidel theories the firmest basis they were ever able to find, he has labored this point at great length, and with great acumen, it must be confessed; but after all, his whole discussion is a mere *argumentum ad hominem* against a particular man, and depends ultimately upon a poor quibble on the word *inconceivable*, which Whewell had happened to use somewhat too loosely. Mill, in fact, denies all necessary truth and absolute certainty. He talks, indeed, of self-evident truths and demonstrations; but how there can be any room for either, if all axioms depend upon experience, not only chronologically, as being suggested in connection with it, but logically, as having experience alone for their basis and voucher, we must leave Mr. Mill and Mr. Mackay to determine.

"A cause is only a selection or summary, more or less accurate, of attendant phenomenal conditions." Vol. i. p. 29.

Mr. Mill more adroitly defines the cause of a phenomenon as "the assemblage of its conditions;" adding that "the cause is not the invariable *antecedent*, but the *unconditional* invariable *antecedent*;" and finally, merely admitting that a cause may be defined as "the assemblage of phenomena, which occurring, some other phenomenon invariably commences or has its origin."

In all these definitions, it would seem that the idea of power or efficiency, that is, the proper idea of *causation*, is quite lost sight of. We have no *noumena*, nothing but phenomenal accompaniments. Under this view, it is, of course, impossible to prove the existence of God as a first cause, unless he become one of the phenomenal conditions of things; and in this view, the cause of moving an arm cannot be the mind, the man willing, but only the volition, the phenomenon, the act of consciousness.

"All notions are subjective, and between human truth and error there is only, strictly speaking, the difference of a greater or less degree of subjectivity."

"All our ideas are results of comparison, the ultimate standard of reference being ourselves." Vol. i. pp. 34, 161.

Of course, then, there are not only no *a priori* axioms,

and no really efficient causes, but no proper objective truth for the human mind. That such is Mr. Mackay's deliberate view is further evident from the following.

"The true religious philosophy of an imperfect being is not a system of creed, but as Socrates thought, an infinite search or approximation. Finality [that is, we suppose, the attainment of real, objective truth,] is but another name for bewilderment and defeat, the common affectation of indolence and superstition." Vol. ii. p. 172.

Thus, then, we can have now no higher guaranty of religious truth,—of the immortality of the soul, for example,—than Socrates had, except the experience of a longer search after it. Nor does it appear by what means we have ascertained it to be *true* that we are on the right track in our search; by what test we determine whether our movement is direct or retrograde, an approximation or an elongation with respect to the truth, or whether it has any relation whatever to that unknown, undiscoverable, unattainable, unimaginable somewhat. The assurance of "progress," as well as of "finality," seems to be annulled on such a scheme.

He develops his theological and ethical ideas thus.

"Ignorance sees nothing necessary, and is self-abandoned to a power tyrannical because defined by no rule, and paradoxical because permitting evil, while assumed to be unlimited, all-powerful, and good. A little knowledge, presuming an identification of the Supreme Cause with the inevitable certainty of perfect reason, but omitting the analysis or interpretation of it, leaves the mind chain-bound in the ascetic fatalism of the Stoic. Something of both these states of feeling attaches to the supernaturalist who contemplates a Being acting through impulse, though with superhuman wisdom, and considering the best courtier to be the most favored subject, combines contradictory expedients, inconsistently mixing the assertion of free action with the enervating service of petition. Man becomes morally free only when the notions of chance and of incomprehensible necessity are both displaced by that of law. Man commands results only by selecting among the contingent the pre-ordained results (!) most suited to his purposes." Vol. ii. p. 164.

"Religion, including morality, is no more than well-directed education; and as the basis of all education must be the notion formed respecting the sources of knowledge and sanctions of duty,

the first great education question is the essentially religious one, — how, or upon what principles, is the world governed; or rather, is it governed upon any principle, since observances of prayer and belief in miracle inevitably tend to countenance the idea, that the Divine government is no more than a capricious exercise of grace and favor." Vol. i. p. 33.

Perhaps some of this might do tolerably for a basis of moral philosophy, if the author had not unfortunately "omitted the analysis or interpretation of it." It must be borne in mind that Mr. Mackay does not admit the existence of a personal God, as will immediately appear; and consequently that the "laws" and "principles of government," and "providential pre-arrangements," and "pre-ordained results," of which he speaks, are not moral, but merely physical laws, not dependent upon an intelligent personal will, but merely upon the "assemblage of phenomena." The motto of his "Intellectual Religion" is from Goethe:—

Nach ewigen ehernen
Grossen Gesetzen
Müssen wir alle
Unseres Daseyns
Kreise vollenden.

He elsewhere says, yet more openly,

"The true purport of Christianity was spiritualism or intellectual religion. This, at least, was the aim of its most eminent teachers, of Stephen, of St. Paul, and of Jesus. Christianity was the 'promised land of the soul,' or life realized; asserting the futility of the misgiving which raised an imaginary barrier between man and God, it effected a reconciliation in the sphere where alone existed the estrangement by neutralizing the phantom of sin within the circle of the human feelings." Vol. ii. p. 517.

Such, then, we are to believe, was the teaching of Stephen, of St. Paul, and of Jesus! That sin is a mere phantom of our own superstitious imaginations, conscience a fallacious misgiving, and all is well and right if we will only think so! And yet we are told about the "sanctions of duty!"

"Miracle, as it must now be understood, implies something inconsistent with the order of a perfect government, something overlooked in the original plan, requiring an interpolation contrary to its general tenor."

But does divine free-agency any more imply interpolation than human? Or is all free-agency, the *specific* action of *will* anywhere, inconsistent with the order of a perfect government, and an original, universal plan?

"It is not incredible that God can raise the dead, for his ability to do so is abundantly evident in nature; it is incredible only that he should do so in a manner inconsistent with his own eternal laws, [that is, miraculously,] and it would have been no irrational inference which should have ascribed an admitted infraction of those laws to Beelzebub, to demoniacal agency instead of to divine." Vol. i. p. 20.

"From the moment when the reality of a divine system of law was manifested to philosophy, the belief in miracle became blasphemous as well as immoral, an imputation on the divine wisdom and goodness."

Thus it will be seen that this modern "manifestation to philosophy" has utterly exploded the divine revelation, and directly reversed the doctrine of blasphemy as laid down by Jesus Christ; and yet it would fain be called Christianity! But let us hear our philosophic enthusiast once more on this point.

"Were miracles really indispensable for religious improvement and consolation, heaven forbid there should be any limits to our credulity, or that we should hesitate for an instant to believe all the exaggerations of oriental expression, or to prefer the wildest dreams of the child or savage to the rash theories of the philosopher. But the hypothesis of miracle has lost its usefulness. It no longer promotes a spirit of piety. Addressed to the ignorant and unthinking, it produces no permanent conviction of comprehensive beneficence and wisdom. It substitutes disarrangement and anarchy for certainty and order. A belief in the miraculous or Messianic character of Jesus was, in his own day, the most decisive test of superiority to vulgar prejudice, and of a disposition to conform to the spiritualism of Christianity. Now, circumstances are reversed. . . . Belief in miracle is worse than useless; it creates false notions of God's nature and government; it arms the imagination against the reason; it discourages the cultivation of the intellect and darkens the path of duty. It demoralizes by superseding prudential care and the feeling of immediate responsibility." Vol. i. pp. 21-23.

How strange, then, that Christendom should have

reached its present unequalled height of civilization and intellectual culture! What a debasing, immoral, and blasphemous thing the Christian religion is, as it was taught by Jesus and his apostles, and as it is embodied in the holy Scriptures! How inimical to the "spirit of piety," and "demoralizing" to human character! And how happy will the world be when once fairly rid of such an incubus!

Our author makes some concessions, it is true; but they only betray the totally subjective character of all his philosophy. If miracles would do him good, Heaven forbid, says he, that he should fail to believe in them. His belief seems to be determined by motives of prudence, by considerations of interest and policy, rather than by proper logical evidence. So easy is his faith that he would believe a lie with all his heart, if he thought it would do him good. If, on the other hand, there is any question of objective truth recognized by him as pertaining to the case, the result would be, according to his theory, that it may have been actually true for a while that Jesus rose from the dead according to the Scriptures, but it has now ceased to be the fact; that it was true, while Jesus lived, that he was the Messiah, but is true no longer. It would seem, however, that the Christian need not despair, for should the modern "manifestation to philosophy" take on some new phase, or simply become so universally disseminated as to be "a vulgar prejudice," it may then become true again that Jesus was the Christ, and that he rose from the dead. Into such self-contradictions does Mr. Mackay fall when he entertains a question of positive fact or of actual truth, and can only juggle with his own subjective conditions.

But if he means really to admit that miracles would not be inconsistent with the wisdom and goodness of God, provided they would contribute to the religious improvement of mankind, or of a large portion of them in any age, then it does not appear how he can so dogmatically declare them to be impossible, absurd, and blasphemous. This admission is all that, on this point, is demanded from philosophy by the Christian. And surely, if miracles were actually wrought for the spiritual improvement of some portion of mankind in one age, that fact would

not cease to be a fact to another portion of mankind in another age, even though the latter should have no need of miracles for their spiritual improvement.

Moreover, our author's definition of a miracle is overstrained and unfair, if the personality of God and his universal providence and agency are admitted. For whether, in the course of nature, his efficiency be immediate, or by means of instrumentalities of his own creation and institution, in either case, his power must be the source and basis of all power, his efficiency the necessary and constant condition and substratum of all efficiency. If, then, for wise and benevolent purposes, he usually operates according to a certain order, according to certain laws, so-called; yet it is not to be supposed that those "laws" are intrinsically sacred, have a moral sanction, are obligatory restraints upon his will; but he is at perfect liberty, without any violation of consistency, to operate in an exceptional way, a way not in accordance with his ordinary methods, whenever in his infinite wisdom and benevolence he sees fit. The law of wisdom and benevolence, the moral law, is the supreme and only absolutely unalterable law of God's government, an inconsistency with which is, in itself, irrational and absurd. In short, the physical is subordinate to the moral; while, in our author's theory, the moral is swallowed up and lost in the physical.

It is even doubtful whether he admits a God possessed of any moral character. His language on this point, and in regard to the proper being of God in general, is wavering, confused, and inconsistent; a phenomenon which may perhaps be explained by the difficulty of using the common language of mankind in giving expression to what he regards as the "latest manifestation to philosophy."

"Deity is the last," he writes, "the most comprehensive and obscure of all generalizations." Vol. i. p. 30.

"The old religionists discovered a Universal Cause, personified it, and prayed to it. The mere notion seemed not only to satisfy the religious feeling, but to solve all problems. Nations unanimously subscribed to the pious formula which satisfied their imaginations, and pleased their vanity by cheating them into a belief that they were wise; but which at the same time supplanted

nature by tradition, the sources of truth by artificial disguises, and at last paralyzed the sentiment that gave birth to it. Science, unlike the rude expedient which stupefied without nourishing the mind," &c. Vol. ii. p. 172.

"If, however, the notion of Deity has been advanced beyond personification by philosophy, the notion of a humanly creating God would again become comparatively childish and undignified." Vol. i. p. 72.

"The God of philosophy differs from the God of 'revelation' in being known to be a human conception, while the other is superstitiously confounded with the object." Vol. ii. p. 161.

Yet, though he thus rejects the personality and objective existence of God as a puerile notion, he elsewhere speaks of Him as good, as choosing, as possessed of will, as being a mind, as designing, &c. "In the perfect code of the universe," says he, "pain is never inflicted except to instruct, to correct, or to save, the uses of adversity being most conspicuous in the precision with which they [who or what?] point their moral." How a being can possess the attributes of moral goodness, of choice, will, and intelligence, and can plan and govern a universe with the design of accomplishing certain wise and beneficent results without possessing personality, we must leave for Mr. Mackay and the modern "manifestation to philosophy" to explain.

Is he then a Pantheist? On this subject he is equally confused and contradictory. At one time, he seems to set Pantheism at the highest summit in the religious progress of the Intellect; and, indeed, this must be his view, unless he gives Atheism a still higher place; at another time, he distinctly acknowledges Pantheism to belong to the first and lowest stage of religious development.

"Dæmonology and Polytheism," he says, "were dissimilar, yet concurrent, developments of Pantheism." Vol. ii. p. 100.

"With the consciousness of estrangement arose varied forms of mediation, one of the earliest of which was a metaphysical Pantheism, producing a more or less deliberate return of the self-conscious mind to the serenity of its childhood." Vol. ii. p. 460.

He then proceeds to trace the gradual rise of Polytheism, and finally of Monotheism. At one time, he claims Pantheism as a doctrine of Christianity; at another, he acknowledges the two to be inconsistent.

"We often hear complacent self-congratulations on the recognition of a personal God, as being the conception most suited to human sympathies, and exempt from the mystifications of Pantheism. But the divinity remains still a mystery notwithstanding all the devices which symbolism, either from the organic or inorganic creation, can supply, and personification is a symbol liable to misapprehension as much, if not more so, than any other, since it is apt to degenerate into a mere reflection of our own infirmities. . . . Objections to Pantheism not only imply ignorance on the part of the Christian objector as to the nature of his own creed (comp. Acts xvii. 28) but as to the point in dispute." Vol. i. p. 150.

"Though the personifying tendency is essentially opposed to Pantheism, both elements are usually found united, since Pantheism rigorously carried out would make religion impossible. For religion is but the feeling and practice suited to a certain theoretical relation between man and God; and the confounding man and God in the universality of nature would overthrow all acts and relations arising from the presumption of their severance." Vol. ii. p. 16.

Is it not here admitted to be an essential trait of Pantheism "to confound man and God in the universality of nature?" Is not such Pantheism confessed to be incompatible with all religion? How, then, is it to be maintained as an essential element of the Christian religion, so that all those poor Christian souls who reject it as utterly fatal to their religion are chargeable with stupidity and sheer ignorance? If Mr. Mackay means that a personal God, as he uses the phrase, implies a corporeal or visible object of the imagination, circumscribed in space; and if he means that Pantheism is not an absolute and unadulterated falsehood, and does not reject and exclude all truth whatever, but coincides with Theism, in the doctrines of the divine omnipresence and omnipotence, for example, then he should have plainly said so, and he might have amused himself in knocking down his own men of straw at his leisure. There is, no doubt, some common ground between Theism and Pantheism; but the terms should be used distinctively, not confusedly. By Pantheism, we suppose a man to mean Pantheism, — Pantheism as a system, as a whole; and by Theism, to mean Theism as it is, and as it is understood by those who profess it. If he means otherwise, he should give his definitions, or employ other terms.

On the doctrine of immortality, compare the following paragraphs.

"While the speculative Pantheist assumes an ocean of spirituality, out of which life and consciousness are unceasingly evolved, and to which they return, the sensuous are unable to appreciate any state of existence beyond the limits of a contracted individuality, as their God also is a 'person,' who must be personally communicated with." Vol. ii. p. 290.

"The belief in immortality is rather a natural feeling, an adjunct of self-consciousness, than a dogma belonging to any age or country. And if any doctrine may be truly said to be inspired or divine, surely it is that which gives eternity to man's nature; which reconciles its seeming anomalies and contradictions; which makes him strong in weakness, perfectible in imperfection; which alone gives an adequate object to his hopes and energies, and value and dignity to his pursuits. The belief in the soul's immortality is concurrent with that in an infinite, external spirit, since it is chiefly through consciousness of the dignity of the mind within us that we learn to appreciate its evidences in the universe." Vol. ii. p. 282.

Why was not this beautiful strain of reasoning pursued to its legitimate results, until it had banished all the author's pantheistic reveries and idle talk about the absurdity of miracles and the stupidity of prayer? Was this honestly said, in full consciousness of its meaning, or was it thrown out as a mere bait to the inconsiderate, "sensuous" reader; or was it only an involuntary and unconscious outburst of the voice of nature, in spite of all the theories of the philosopher? We cannot tell.

We were well aware that many of the leading philosophers and so-called theologians of Germany had agreed to maintain the absolute impossibility of miracles, to deny the personality of God, to hold a *quasi* theology, vibrating between Pantheism and Atheism, and to transfer into the mists of transcendentalism, or utterly to annul, the immortality of the soul. By a glaring inconsistency, our author having, with a most childlike trustfulness, followed them through all the rest, on this last point, at least, in some happier moments, abandons their company. After Strauss's mythical neology had made itself the grave of positive Christianity and of a personal God, it culminated, at last, in being the grave of immortality.

He closed his great book on Christian Doctrine with the demoniacally triumphant exclamation, that "the last enemy to be destroyed is *Das Jenseits*, — whatever lies beyond the bounds of sensible existence and present experience." While Mr. Mackay freely deals out to us the skepticism, ribaldry, and blasphemy of Strauss, in regard to the Holy Scriptures, and on almost all other points, he momentarily, at least, dissents from him on this. Let him have the full credit of it.

What work a man must make with the development of the religious idea among the Hebrews, coming to his task with such views as those above exhibited, it is not difficult to anticipate. If any one believes the conception of a personal or a creating God puerile; prayer and worship an enervating, degrading service; miracles impossible, and belief in them useless, and worse than useless, nay, impious and blasphemous; — of course, he can have no great sympathy, and he must exercise a most commendable degree of self-control if he can have any great patience, with the histories and biographies, the events and personages, the wonders and prophecies, of the Bible. If, instead of calling them lies and barefaced forgeries, he treats them as myths and well-meant allegories, he may take great credit for his candor and forbearance. He need not trouble himself about external evidences. He has settled the whole matter *a priori*. It is impossible the Scriptures should be truly a "revelation;" for the plain reason, that no revelation whatever is possible. Such is the method of a class of philosophical critics, who profess to come to their work of destruction without any prejudices or assumptions. Such is the principle with which they proceed to break down all the carved work of the temple of Christian truth, and to defile the Divine dwelling-place by casting it to the ground. But if the instrument they wield is not *begged*, they can only answer, as the man to the prophet, "Alas, master! for it was *borrowed*."

In applying his begged or borrowed principle to the Hebrew Scriptures, our author does not always restrain himself within the bounds of that patronizing indulgence, which he seems to have prescribed to himself as a general rule. The scoffs of Paine and the mockery of Vol-

taire are too often mingled with the stereotyped objections of the old English Deists, and the newly-vamped forms in which, with a bristling array of circulating, critical erudition, and great pomp and circumstance of philosophical pretension, the same objections are reproduced by the modern school of German infidels. It is quite amusing to see with what *naïveté* all these things are retailed by Mr. Mackay, as if he were in blissful ignorance of their ever having been said (in English) before; yet as if they were now, at length, established facts, which no man in his senses, provided he had any senses worth mentioning to be in, would think of disputing; or as if they were oracular revelations from the tripod, which all to whose ears they should come would drink in with humble faith and stupid admiration.

Mr. Mackay does not condescend to reason. No; he prophesies till the going down of the sun. He takes for granted, and assumes, and insinuates, and suggests, and implies, asserts and reasserts, and concludes he is right, of course. We are to receive the whole on his authority. Yet not exactly so; for his pages are laden, to an almost unparalleled extent, with references to other authorities, ancient and modern, oriental and occidental, sacred and profane, pertinent and impertinent. One stands perfectly aghast at his immense erudition. But, alas! the fallacy of references is equalled only by the fallacy of statistics. How easy it is, by a certain plodding process, to accumulate huge masses of references, especially when nine tenths of them may be borrowed with so great facility, is notorious to all who have any considerable experience of authors and books. Indeed, whether considered as an indication of an author's ability and learning, or as a confirmation of his statements, they are equally deceptive and unsatisfactory. They are much more likely to be resorted to by the special pleader, by the pedantic and paradoxical, than by simple truth, sound logic, or real learning. At all events, they prove nothing until they have been traced to their sources, verified, and fairly estimated.

Although there are some novel suggestions and theories in Mr. Mackay's book, which, as will be seen further on, are not of a character to procure for his name a very

enviable reputation, yet there is scarcely a fact or difficulty, of any tangible importance, stated in the whole two volumes, which had not been stated and answered over and over again; almost all of them having been urged by the most notorious of the infidel and Deistical writers, and recognized and replied to in the most familiar treatises on the Christian Evidences and Commentaries on the Holy Scriptures. His gravely assumed objections have not only been slain, but buried. He has brought their ghosts upon the stage again, in mythical German costume. That is all. What should we gain by attempting to slay them over again? There is nothing left in them substantial enough for solid weapons to do execution upon. There is scarcely enough of tangible ratiocination, in all this portion of Mr. Mackay's work, to steady or check the motion of a counter-argument. The only result would be, to wrench the arm of the assailant. If one deals with it at all, he must deal with it in pure detail, following it from point to point. It has no development, no deduction, no unity, no progress. It is one steady, monotonous step by step. It is a *rudis indigestaque moles*,—a monstrous induction of independent assumptions.

Yet having undertaken to present to our readers a review of Mr. Mackay's book, and having stated the general philosophical basis on which we understand his Biblical criticisms to rest, we shall proceed to select, almost at random, certain points in those criticisms, as further specimens of the character of the work.

"As proof of the puerility of the Jews, in their notions of literary criticism," he says, "it is only necessary to recollect that the book of Enoch, an evident imitation of Daniel, written under Herod the Great, [so Gfrörer and Mr. Mackay say, two witnesses, *ipsi dixerunt*,] is seriously quoted by the Apostle Jude, as composed by 'the seventh from Adam.'" Vol. i. p. 13.

As though Messrs. Gfrörer and Mackay had positively ascertained that St. Jude could not have had access to the same traditions from which the author of the book of Enoch drew his materials; or as though no such traditions, if they existed, could possibly be true, though confirmed by divine inspiration; or, finally, as though the insertion of any thing in the book of Enoch must necessarily

make it false; so that, to repeat any thing whatever contained in it must, of course, be to retail a lie! And this he calls "literary criticism!"

"The heavenly host," that is, the sun, moon, planets, and stars, — which, according to him, we may suppose were the Elohim, — "were appointed or divided," he says, "by Jehovah himself, as permissible *objects of worship* among the nations;" and he cites Deut. iv. 19, in proof. Alas for the maturity of "literary criticism!" Truly the man must be sinking; he catches, not at straws, but at the optical illusions of straws. The fatuity of his interpretation is, if possible, enhanced by the consideration that, for his part, he holds the book of Deuteronomy to be a late production, got up by the returned Babylonish exiles, who, as he admits, held all idolatry in detestation. Elsewhere, he makes the God of the Hebrews himself, Jehovah Elohim of Hosts, to be, literally, at one time, the sun, like Osiris; at another, the planet Saturn, Chiun, Moloch, fortifying himself by a gross perversion of Amos v. 26; and, finally, to be a mere stone, — yes, a proper, bodily stone, a downright, visible, solid stone. (pp. 123, 137.) This last is a favorite notion of his, which he develops at large, and to which he frequently recurs. The God whom Jacob worshipped was literally and properly the very stone he laid his head upon. So Mr. Mackay expressly says. And, by the same rule, it might be shown that the same Jehovah was a literal shield and buckler, and castle and fortress, &c.; and this is what is called "literary criticism."

"The pattern which Moses saw in the mount," he asserts, on the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is directly in the teeth of his assumption — confirmed by reference to Josephus and the Book of Wisdom, whose statements, even if they were much clearer than they are, would be little to the purpose; to Nork's Dictionary, a high authority doubtless, but which we have not had the pleasure of seeing; and finally, to a passage in Creutzer's *Symbolik*, which contains not one syllable on the subject — "these images of heavenly things," he roundly asserts, "were an attempt to express the religion of the universe by a mimicry of its elements and architecture." And withal, he is quite scandalized at the idea of the "grotesque cherubim." p. 139.

"The garden of the Lord, like the Paradise of Semiramis," says he, "is planted with every pleasant and useful tree ; among them there is the 'tree of life,' that obvious symbol met with in almost all mythologies, and familiar in Scandinavia as in India. The tree of life was a common Oriental emblem of the Spirit of Nature. The allegorical mantle of Zeus, on which were painted earth and ocean, was said to have been spread over an oak, *like* the 'stretched out' heavens of the Hebrew prophet, the true tabernacle of which Jehovah on his holy mountain was himself the prop." p. 416.

For proof that Jehovah thus performs the office of Atlas, we are gravely referred to Ex. xxvi. 30, and xxxiii. 9. Those two passages read as follows :

"And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was showed thee in the mount. . . . And it came to pass as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and (he) talked with Moses." [comp. Ps. lcx. 7 : "He spake to them in the cloudy pillar."]

Therefore, Jehovah is the "prop" that supports the canopy of heaven ! We know not whether most to admire the logic, or the "literary criticism." Of course, he was too honest (?) to quote the passages to which he refers. If all his innumerable references are equally pertinent, they must prove a great deal.

The story of the miraculous conception affords an opportunity for infidel sneers, ribald innuendoes, and degrading comparisons, of which, of course, he could not fail to take advantage. Having told the stories of Minerva, Horus, Bacchus ; of Apis, Roostem, Buddha ; of Fo and Shing-Moo ; of Confucius and Murcius ; of Simon Magus, Zenghis Khan, Zoroaster, &c. ; he concludes that "the unfounded charge [generous and candid admission !] of adultery against Mary, invented by certain Jews, according to the saying '*Multi nomine Divorum thalamos iniere pudicos,*' may be regarded as a just retribution for the story of the supernatural conception." Vol. ii. p. 348.

We will here take occasion, once for all, to call attention to the general theory or method which is involved in the statements above recited, and which underlies and pervades Mr. Mackay's whole work. His "literary criti-

cism" does not proceed by examining the positive, external, historical evidence bearing upon alleged facts, and thus deducing his conclusions. By no means. That were quite beneath the lofty flight of his mythical philosophy. Rather he reasons thus, if he may be supposed to condescend to reason at all:—The moment any traditions, or imitations, of the true religion, though so distant and far-fetched as the allegorical mantle of Zeus compared with the stretched-out heavens of Isaiah, are found in any heathen mythology or false religion, immediately there is no true religion. If the heathen have ascribed to their gods, acknowledged to be false, any attributes or actions which the Scriptures ascribe to Him whom they allege to be the true God, it follows that He is as false as the rest, and all such stories are equally fabulous. Miraculous works and manifestations have been mythically ascribed to heathen deities; therefore, all so-called revelations and stories of miracles are, without further examination, to be consigned to the common mass of mythical rubbish. If men have generally expected and anticipated a manifestation of deity in humanity,—whether guided by primeval tradition or by a sort of universal natural instinct; and by one or the other, it would seem they must have been guided,—the very fact that such an anticipation is natural and almost universal, proves that no such manifestation was ever made, or can ever be credible to a sound and rational human mind. In short, since falsehood can mimic the truth, there is and can be no truth at all. Thus is this boasted mythical theory engulfed in the bottomless pit of absolute skepticism. The same principle may be applied to history in general, as well as to religion. History began in fable, and has been imitated by fiction all along; therefore all history is fabulous and fictitious. Especially must this be true of all extraordinary and unique historical events and personages. For, it must be remembered that external evidence, and all discrimination based upon it, are quite ignored. We may expect, ere long, from this mythico-historical school, in addition to the monographic essays which they have already produced, a universal history on a purely subjective method, constructed on strictly *a priori* principles, and evolved according to certain presupposed laws of

necessary development. We shall then know where we came from.

"The system of divine revelation," says Mr. Mackay, "appeared to a Bible writer to have been the reverse of that uniformity and consistency which most rational persons would now be inclined to ascribe to the Supreme Being. He speaks of it as having been of 'many parts and divers fashions,' varied according to place or occasion." Vol. ii. p. 177.

We know not what sort of "uniformity and consistency most rational persons would," in our author's opinion, "be inclined to ascribe to the Supreme Being." But we will note, first, that he seems to imply that most rational persons recognize a "Supreme Being;"—"Being," observe, not a mere subjective conception, nor a mere *modus operandi sine operante*. In the second place, we cannot help thinking, at the risk of being set down in certain quarters as quite behind the age, that, considering the manifold combinations, the boundless variety, the wonderfully diversified adaptations, which characterize the works of the Creator around us to such a degree that, not to speak of the almost interminable division into kingdoms, orders, classes, genera, species, sub-species, and varieties, scarcely two individuals are to be found perfectly alike,—most rational persons would be led to the conclusion that, provided God should condescend to make a revelation of his will to man from time to time, he would adapt its divers fashions to different places and occasions. Animals and vegetables, and different species of animals, are provided with very different kinds of apparatus for breathing the air, and for taking and assimilating their food; and the machinery for locomotion, for earth, air, and water, is not all contrived on the same specific model. In all their diversities, there is an admirable adaptation to circumstances, to various places and occasions; while the same general plan of structure is adhered to throughout. If, then, God were to make a revelation to man, we should be led by the analogy of nature to expect that it would be adapted to man's constitution, character, and circumstances,—would be diversified according to the exigencies of his mental and moral condition. If it were made in the form of language, for example, it would be conveyed in the language which those addressed by it could understand.

Such would seem to us, in our simplicity, to be the natural and rational conclusion. And this conclusion is confirmed by reference to the course of general history, and to the laws which govern the development of the human mind and of human society; which are all, it is to be presumed, included in the universal plan of the Supreme Being. But we add finally, that, if a man has made out *a priori*, or assumed *e nihilo*, that all revelation whatever is absurd and impossible, then he only trifles in suggesting specific difficulties, which, if removed, make the case no better.

The Hebrew theory of retribution, *à la Mackay*, is as follows:— Under the Theocracy, only temporal rewards and punishments were proposed; afterwards, these being found to be a mere hoax, the prophets reversed the theory, and began to speak of the prosperity of the wicked; hence the phrases, “men of the world,” men who “have their portion in this life,” and the denunciation of “woe to the rich,” but “blessed are the poor,” in the New Testament. This is the way to make one portion of Scripture contradict, instead of completing and explaining, another.

The age of Ecclesiastes is coolly assumed to have been that of the later Persian satraps. He does not deem it necessary to give any authority whatever for the assumption. He then proceeds, as coolly, to expound the philosophy of the book after his own views; concluding, with Ewald, on the whole, that the upshot of Ecclesiastes was, a premature attempt to introduce a revolution, recapitulating and rationalizing the old religion, which was successfully made only by Christianity.

Mr. Mackay asserts that Eloah, (God,) in the book of Job, by his definitive sentence, pronounces rash and inconclusive those explanations of the Divine Government in allowing the virtuous to suffer, which, according to him, are contained in Matt. ix. 2; Deut. viii. 5; 2 Sam. vii. 14; Prov. iii. 11, 12; Isa. xlviii. 10; liii. 10, and Hab. i. 12; and which are adopted in the arguments of some of Job's friends. Of course, with the aid of “literary criticism,” and especially of the patent illuminator of an *a priori* rejection of all revelation, he does not deem it rash to presume to understand the statements of Eloah in the book of Job better than their Author himself, even

though *he* may have given his own explanations elsewhere. The only infallible authority is Mr. Mackay, and whatever he asserts no rational man can doubt to be true!

Having thus fairly got possession of the seat of infallibility, he hesitates not to pronounce that the doctrine of the New Testament on this subject of retribution, in the present and in the future world, is a "system of mere guesswork," "a superstitious and monstrous fiction;" and that, notwithstanding the compliment which, with Ewald, he had just paid to Christianity at the expense of Ecclesiastes.

He states that the moon and stars bowed down to Joseph, (he inadvertently omits the sun,) and the eleven sheaves made obeisance to him; as though it were stated in Scripture as a fact, and not as a dream. He then adds, in a note, that Joseph is son of the sun according to Jacob's own interpretation, Gen. xxxvii. 10. That is to say, if the sun is, in a dream, made to represent Jacob, then Jacob represents the sun, and Joseph is son of the sun! All which is to show, that Joseph was a mythical personage, equivalent to Phœbus or Helios; which he would further confirm by the fact that Joseph married the daughter of the high-priest of On, Heliopolis, Ain Schemes, or fountain of the sun, adding that it is well known how often, in mythology, the priest is substituted for the god! Such is the most approved method of transmuting the simplest and plainest narrative into a myth.

In the development of the doctrine of a future state among the Hebrews, he makes a certain "phraseology" give rise to the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and "prepare the way for the adoption of higher conceptions, so soon as man should become deliberately conscious of his own dignity." So, according to him, words come first and conceptions afterwards. We had supposed that the contrary was usually the historical order; this seems to be the mythical. At all events, certain conceptions came undeniably to exist; and the problem was how, without divine revelation, to account for them. The mythical account is, they grew out of certain phrases. Whence the phrases came does not appear, except, like the atheist's world, by pure chance.

He proceeds to say that the contact of Zoroastrian

opinions may have subsequently favored the development of Hebrew conceptions of a future state, though it did not originate them; and adds, that "the accounts of persons supposed to have been recalled to life by the prophets *must* have been recorded about this time (during the Captivity) and could scarcely have been tolerated, had there not been an impression of a bodily revival." Such are his methods of verifying facts, and of determining the age of any particular portions of the Bible.

He considers Isaiah a mere generic appellation, and the book so entitled a modern collection of anonymous effusions, a sort of Hebrew Anthology. In this he follows the German neological critics with more unhesitating confidence than any English scholar ever showed for Wolff's theory of an aggregate Homer; a theory which, though once so rife, is happily now nearly exploded. He does not seem to know that any other view of Isaiah anywhere exists. But it is observable that he assigns Isa. xxvi. 14 to the times of the Captivity, as well as Isa. xl. 66; thus indirectly surrendering the only plausible evidence for a duplicate Isaiah which was ever alleged,—that drawn from the diversity of style between the first thirty-nine chapters and the remainder of the book. He very cavalierly disposes of the "Pseudo-Daniel" as an "unknown writer;" declares the hope of Socrates vastly superior to that of the Hebrew prophets; and the New Testament interpretations of prophecy to be superstitious.

He draws out a long parallel between the history of Moses and that of Jesus. He acknowledges that the idea of types and of typical personages was familiar to the Hebrew mind, and is fully recognized in the New Testament; but, instead of allowing this to be a source of evidence for the Messiahship of Jesus, he would wrest it in quite the contrary direction. The history of Jesus resembles in many points that of Moses; therefore, says he, it is a counterfeit. Here, again, we meet one of the strongholds of the mythical interpretation. But why do they not pretend that the history of Moses was got up to suit that of Jesus? When history and historical evidence are ignored altogether, we can arrange matters entirely at our *a priori* pleasure. Whence came the story of Moses?

They answer, it was a legend. Who invented the legend, and established the institutions connected with it, and made a whole nation believe that the legend was true, and that they and their fathers had observed those very institutions from the time assigned for their origin? Why, those exiles who returned from the Babylonish captivity. Whether it were they, or whoever it was, it was certainly a remarkable instance of universal agreement in self-delusion and self-stultification. But, say they, the story of Moses existed, and that of Jesus, resembling it, was copied after it, as a matter of course. We might still ask, in reply, considering the long antecedently existing Messianic anticipations of the Jews, and considering that this is a matter of mere imagination, of mere myth-manufacture, of mere fabrication, how happens it that the copy was never got up, before or since, in such a manner as to make any permanent claims on the faith of this same Jewish people? And how happened it that those multitudes of them who rejected the Messiahship of Jesus did not expose and explode the counterfeit story on the spot? How did it escape being strangled at its very birth? Perhaps some sort of lame mythical answer can be given to these questions. But it is useless to reason with our mythologists, who seem to assume that myths may grow up in the Augustan age, and amidst intelligent, eagle-eyed, violent adversaries, as well as in the misty twilight of ante-historical periods. The truth is, the direct and indirect historical evidence of the authenticity and proper historical character of our Four Gospels is stronger than such evidence in the case of almost any other book of that age. It has never been rebutted by the mythologists, and never can be, except by their *a priori* fancies. The mass of evidence collected by Lardner, or even the mere compend of it given by Paley, is abundantly sufficient to overwhelm all Mr. Mackay's mythical suggestions and positive assertions, though supported by the insinuations, and assumptions, and theories, and "plausible reasonings" of Strauss, and Gfrörer, and Ghillany, and their entire school.

Our author applies the same mythical hypothesis to account for the story of the day of Pentecost. The speaking with tongues he declares to have been a mere ut-

tering of unintelligible and unmeaning sounds ; as though anybody needed any extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit to exercise such a gift. Simon Magus might certainly have saved his money, if this were all. He says that Paul, with all his speaking of tongues, (for which, by the way, Paul thought fit to thank God, as though it were something more than a faculty of jabbering gibberish,) nevertheless could not speak Lycaonian ; in proof of which he refers to Acts xiv. 11, 14. How his point is proved by a comparison of these verses, we cannot divine, unless it is by the rule of contraries. At all events, if he will read a little further on, he will find a speech which Paul and Barnabas made to the Lycaonians, and which, it would seem, the Lycaonians understood ; and consequently, if the Apostles did not use the Lycaonian speech, it was not because they could not, but because there was no need of it. But perhaps Mr. Mackay may have had an interview with some of those old Lycaonians, by the aid of Animal Magnetism, Spiritual Knockings, or some such "manifestation," and thus learned the fact which he so positively states.

In the case of Jephthah's daughter (Vol. ii. p. 432,) we thought at first that Mr. Mackay had raised a new difficulty. He states the case thus :— "The religious vow too had its dark and its bright side ; there was the simple dedication, and the 'Cherem' or vow of extermination, through which Jephthah purchased victory by devoting to Jehovah (or to death) not whatsoever, but whosoever should first issue from the door of his house on his return." "The words of Jephthah," he adds in a note, "are a commentary on the law of the first-born in Exodus ; the object, he declares, shall be Jehovah's ; that is, he explains, I will offer it up for a burnt-offering. 'No Cherem,' says the law, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29, 'which a man devotes as Cherem to Jehovah, of all which is his, either of man and beast, or of the field of his possession, shall be redeemed ; every devoted thing is most holy to Jehovah. None devoted which shall be devoted by men shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death.'"

Here an effort is plainly made to leave the impression that the law, in the first place, recognized the right and the propriety of Jephthah's making a vow ("Cherem")

which might include his own daughter in its application; and, then, positively and peremptorily required him, having made his daughter "Cherem," to put her to death by offering her as a burnt-offering to Jehovah. And this view is to be still further confirmed by reference to the "law of the first-born in Exodus." Thus, all who would believe the divine legation of Moses and the divine origin of his laws are to be driven to the awful conclusion, that God actually recognized, nay instituted and peremptorily commanded, the offering of human sacrifices. But how stands the case? In the first place, the law of the first-born in Exodus expressly and repeatedly requires that the first-born of man, the first-born among children, shall not be offered in sacrifice, but shall be redeemed. And in the very chapter of Leviticus from which the law of the "Cherem" is quoted, it is expressly provided that "if any man shall make a singular vow, the *persons* shall be Jehovah's by *estimation*;" and then are given in detail the estimations at which the several ages of males and females should be redeemed. Moreover, the law expressly forbids the sacrifice of children, and denominates it an abomination to the Lord; it prescribes what animals, and what only, should be offered to the Lord, and declares to be unclean the priest or any man who should have so much as touched the dead body either of a man or of an unclean beast; so that no person could possibly offer a man or an unclean beast in sacrifice without a violation of this law. In the second place, *the vow of Jephthah is not described in the book of Judges as "Cherem,"* and therefore does not come under the injunctions of the law in Levit. xxvii. 28, 29, cited above; but it was "Neder," or what is called "a singular vow," in the first verse of the same chapter; and, therefore, in legal strictness, should have come under the provisions there made for redemption by estimation. This is *the* essential point in Mr. Mackay's argument; and his calling the vow of Jephthah "Cherem" is either a wilful and dishonest perversion of Scripture, or an unpardonable oversight in so grave a matter; unless, perhaps, it may be explained by the fact that, in his acknowledged ignorance of the oriental languages, he was obliged to take this statement at second-hand, and if so, it only shows how little reliance can be placed on his

guides or on those who follow them. It may be added here, that if Jephthah's vow had been "Cherem," it would have been self-contradictory, unless we read, as some have proposed, "*or*" instead of "*and* I will offer it a burnt-offering;" as no "Cherem," when it concerned men or unclean beasts, was to be offered in sacrifice; the "Cherem" being properly a *curse*, or vow of utter extermination. In the third place, it is not incumbent on us to explain the history of Jephthah's vow, or to decide the question about the manner of its actual execution. Besides the point just referred to, Mr. Mackay has brought forward nothing new upon the subject. Treatises and commentaries in abundance, by the most learned linguists and critics, are accessible to all our readers; enough to prevent us, and, we should have supposed, enough to have prevented Mr. Mackay, from dogmatizing in the case. What we have proposed to do, is simply to show that, if Jephthah sacrificed his daughter, it was not only not in obedience to, but in direct and manifest violation of, the law of Moses. And, on such a supposition, all that need further be said to relieve the mind of a believer in divine revelation is, that neither the statement that the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, nor the allusion to his faith made in the New Testament, can be construed into a sentence of divine approval or justification of all his conduct, — any more, at least, than similar statements in the cases of Samson and of many others.

Mr. Mackay frequently repeats the stale sneers of infidelity and atheism at the "sacrifice of Isaac;" and, it being his object (as at p. 414, Vol. ii.) to show that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob required and accepted human sacrifices, he begins by saying that "it must be *assumed* that the Deity who prohibits the offering of human sacrifices under pain of death was, even if known in name, unknown in nature to the patriarch who believed in the authenticity of a divine command to *murder his son*. The compilers of the Sacred Books, indeed, found it necessary to make the commencement of idolatry contemporaneous with the Judges," &c. Now the story of Abraham and Isaac has been familiar to the minds of Jews and Christians from the earliest times to this day; and even Mr. Mackay cannot pretend to have discovered

any new facts in connection with it, tending to show or enhance its alleged shocking and impious nature. Yet the most gentle, pious, and polished minds in Christendom have neither felt nor found any thing shocking or impious in it. It has been reserved for such men as Morgan, Paine, Voltaire, and the philosophers of that Illumination which shone forth in all its practical splendor in the fiery scenes of the Old French Revolution, and for the later reflections and echoes of that school of philosophy among the infidels of Germany and their followers, — to be disgusted and horrified at the idea of that ancient scene of sublime faith and holy obedience. It is to be observed, also, that a general principle in the author's treatment of the Scriptures is betrayed in the foregoing quotation. He capriciously assumes any statement of fact contained in them to be authentic, particularly if he thinks he can make it the means of vilifying the God of revelation; and then, instead of admitting the explanations which other portions of Scripture might furnish of the case assumed, he simply proceeds, apparently on the *a priori* principles of his borrowed theory, or without any rhyme or reason at all, to brand all such explanatory portions as interpolated fabrications.

Thus, the story of Abraham and Isaac is assumed as undoubted historical fact, while "the compilers of the Sacred Books" are represented as having constructed the history till the time of the Judges, not on the basis of truth and fact, but with a view to certain political and ecclesiastical ends, — that is, in sublimated Teutonic phrase, to have invented myths, or in plain English, to have palmed forgeries upon their countrymen. Our author has nowhere undertaken to state plainly and connectedly what parts of Scripture are authentic statements of fact, and what parts are fiction; nor has he anywhere given his positive reasons and demonstrative evidences for the truth of the theory on which he proceeds. Indeed, one hardly knows how to answer such statements as his otherwise than by a flat and simple contradiction. So lawless is his caprice that he even contradicts himself. Thus, in his statement about idolatry being first recognized in the book of Judges, he forgets the story of the golden calf, which he himself afterwards treats as authentic.

"We are misled by imagining the Hebrew God to have been throughout, what he appears later, a Being elevated above nature, whose physical aspect is absorbed in his political, tutelar, or moral character. There is no reason for thinking that he whom the Bible itself confounds with the God of Pharaoh, the God of Carmel, and the Midianitish Deity of Horeb, (!) who deferred to other gods so far as to acknowledge their existence and to be jealous of them, who dealt alternately fortune and fear, bread and extermination, differed originally from the object of the nature-worship commonly prevailing in Arabia, Palestine and Phenicia.

. The patriarch who pleased God by an act afterwards denounced as abomination must have been a follower of this cruel power El or Ilus, whose peculiar characteristic was to sacrifice or devour his own children. The same acts and the same conception applied to Jehovah as to Baal. Self-mutilation was a part of the ritual of both. [This last is to be proved by referring to 1 Kings xviii. 28; Jer. xli. 5; Isa. lvi. 4; and Matt. xix. 12.!] There is no substantial reason why the great Syrian deity seated on the bull, should not be compared with Jehovah placed in the same posture, or figured under the same symbol [where?] especially when we know that the feast days of Baal were the same as Jehovah's; Hos. ii. : 11, 12, 16, 17 (!), and that Jehovah's priests, with the fanatical Jehu at their head, were not only idolaters, but murderers and robbers. Both deities were symbolized by the sun; Jehovah's continuing help was assured by continuance of day, or arrived with the heat of noon."

He refers in proof to Ex. xvii. 12, and Josh. x. 14. That is, because the hands of Moses were steady till sunset, and because the sun stood still in its course at the command of Joshua, therefore Jehovah is symbolized by the sun, is the sun, is Baal! This is a favorite theme and argument with our author; to which, as to many others of his blasphemous assumptions, he seeks to give the air of plausibility, and, indeed, of general acceptance, by positive assertions and frequent repetitions. He proceeds, by equally solid arguments, to identify Jehovah with Moloch, with Uranus, with Saturn,—"the Saturn who caused a man to be stoned for gathering sticks on his day of rest!" that is, on Saturday;—and by a similar etymological argument, it could be demonstrated that Christians now worship the sun;—with Dionysus, with Orcus, with "Erebus or phantom of darkness, as in the wrestling with Jacob and in Abraham's vision." A note is here added.

"God says to Israel, whose name is explained by the legend, 'let me go for the day breaketh.' So the dæmon Rakshakas of the Mahabrahata are powerful only in the dark, and the shuddering horses of Mephistopheles dread the morning." . . . "Jehovah was by no means indifferent to the quantity or quality of his food; he required the choicest morsels, the fat and the blood; he spoke with bitterness of the savory food taken from him to be given to rivals. . . . The Jehovah of Aaron and of Samaria was worshipped under the same symbol and with the same rites. . . . Jehovah-worship appears under two forms: the idolatrous taught by Aaron, of which the Israelitish calf-worship was but a continuation, and the orthodox reformed religion without image or similitude appearing in Deuteronomy, but which it is impossible to agree with the later Jews in considering as Mosaic."

Why not? Silence alone answers. Was the real Mosaic religion, then, idolatrous? Mr. Mackay himself, we believe, admits the Decalogue to be possibly Mosaic. Is the Decalogue idolatrous or orthodox? But "Ghillany argues plausibly," and "the being who ate blood and fat, and enjoyed the sweet savour of his sacrifices, was *not likely* to have presented a mere mysterious blank to his sensuous adorers amidst the complicated symbolism of the appointed place of meeting with him." Therefore, the whole current of the Hebrew Scriptures and of Jewish tradition to the contrary notwithstanding, for such good and sufficient reasons, Jehovah was worshipped as an idol in the holy of holies, in the temple, and on high places; and the religion of Moses was idolatry!

Moreover "Jehovah's altar was furnished at the corners with the horns of the *calf-idol*; reminding us [whom?] of those hollow Moloch images of Phenicia forming kilns or furnaces into which the victim was thrown. . . . The tabernacle and golden candlestick, those images and representations of 'heavenly things,' of which, if the candlestick lighted each evening counterfeited the planets, and the tabernacle the universe, the altar would be the all-devouring power or Saturn residing in it. Atonement was made *to it* — offered *to it* daily — while the Jehovah of the holy of holies required it only once a year. . . . It was *probably* a brazen machine of this kind, uniting the conception of altar and God, before which Solomon stretched forth his hands at the consecration of the temple, addressing it as Jehovah. [And saying, "behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have built!!"] . . . The neigh-

borhood of the altar was as formidable to life as that of the flaming mountain made by the divine presence to 'smoke as a furnace,' and so converted into a gigantic Moloch image which to approach or touch was death. If superstition may be said to have reached its climax when, overcoming the most powerful of human feelings, it brought the infatuated parent to kiss the bull-headed instrument of infanticide, [that is, he would seem to say, the altar of Jehovah; and then adduces in proof, Hos. xiii. 2; and 1 Kings xix. 18; where, upon reference, any reader will find that the worship of Baalim is spoken of, and denounced as abominable and destructive idolatry,] it is not astonishing that one Hebrew mother should have ventured to strike the guilty altar with her slipper, saying, 'Wolf! how long wilt thou continue to devour the treasure of Israel's children!!' Vol. ii. pp. 414-429.

"Jehovah's aspect was death; his password, 'destruction;' his breath, the consuming fire of Tophet. He was emphatically the Terrific God, nay Terror personified. No one but the priest dared approach within 2000 cubits of the place of his *fancied* presence." And so on for pages. "The sanguinary principle, sanctioned by the example of Abraham, extends through *the whole of Hebrew ritual and practice*. The oft-recurring phrase, the being hung, or 'dying before the Lord,' *evidently* means a sacrifice or religious act of atonement. The wholesale murders of Shittim and Gibeah, like the similar individual acts performed not in reference to a foreign idol, but under the immediate influence of the spirit of Jehovah, were strictly sacrifices to a Moloch whose plague ceased only on consummation of the rite. The calf-worship at Horeb is said to have been signalized by the sacrificial massacre of 3000 people. [Why "sacrificial?" was the calf-worship the worship of the true Jehovah? was not the "reformed religion" introduced ages afterwards?] On this occasion, the Levites were authorized to be the executioners of a 'Cherem,' the form in which men were allowed to sacrifice themselves or any member of their families by a voluntary vow. [But in the first place, there is no "Cherem," nor any vow of any sort, referred to in this case at Horeb; and in the second place the law of "Cherem" which he cites, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29, does not authorize men to sacrifice themselves or any member of their families. He then cites Ex. xxxii. 29, which, even with his own forced interpretation, is nothing to his purpose; and proceeds:] The slaughter represented as a punishment, for worshipping the calf is more *probably* (?) part of the calf-worship, that is a Moloch offering. (!!) The act which in Abraham's case was only purposed is here completed, and the issue in both cases is explained to be a blessing proportioned to its importance."

That is to say, the execution of criminals is a human sacrifice offered to Jehovah Moloch!! And this practice, he says, was regularly authorized as a standing law; in proof of which he cites Deut. xiii. 13-16. It is there commanded that the inhabitants of an apostate, idolatrous city shall, after due investigation made, be smitten with the edge of the sword, and the city and all that is therein made "Cherem;" and, because it is added that the spoil should be gathered into the midst of it, and that both city and spoil should (according to his translation) "be burnt with fire *as a burnt-offering* to Jehovah," it is straightway inferred that here a wholesale human sacrifice to Moloch is commanded. Whereas the words, "as a burnt-offering," are a sheer interpolation of Mr. Mackay's; *useless*, because, without them, the English received version expresses entirely and exactly all that is in the original; *wickedly false*, because the Hebrew word in the text, translated "burnt," is *never used for offering a "burnt-offering" to Jehovah*.* And as to the slaughter of the inhabitants of the idolatrous city for apostacy, as that was high-treason under the Theocracy, it is not a penalty which need so greatly surprise, or which can in any way support the author's sweeping conclusions. He afterwards cites such passages as Isa. xxxiv. 6; Jer. xlv. 10; and Ezek. xxxix. 17; where, from the connection in which the word "sacrifice" is used, he infers that human victims are intended. But the style in all these cases is highly metaphorical; and he seems not to be aware that the Hebrew word translated "to sacrifice," meant originally, and is often used in the Scriptures to mean, simply *to slaughter, to kill*; as in Deut. xii. 15; 1 Kings i. 9, 19, 25; 2 Chron. xviii. 2; and 1 Sam. xxviii. 24. Here, and indeed throughout his book, he assumes his own interpretation of the Scriptures as if it were the only interpretation ever thought of, were universally admitted as a matter of course, or were confirmed by some infallible

* This word occurs in the Bible some 150 times, and more commonly refers to the burning of offal, refuse matters, unclean and abominable things; and hence it is not strange that, in three or four cases, it refers to sacrifices offered to Moloch, Adramelech, or Baal. 2 Kings xvii. 31; Jer. vii. 31; xix. 5; and Deut. xii. 31. The other word signifying *to burn*, or rather *to send up*, or *cause to ascend*, and which is used in connection with burnt-offerings, occurs, in that sense, perhaps 250 or 300 times.

oracle or authority. Either he, or the German critics by whom he swears, must apparently have received some new revelation or "manifestation to philosophy." The farrago of his blasphemous doctrines, which we have given above as a sample of the rest, we have supposed to need in general no comment, but sufficiently to refute itself to the minds of most readers; and yet we could not restrain ourselves from throwing in an occasional interjection.

Mr. Mackay has devoted a chapter to the "antiquity of the Levitical Law." He thus begins.

"The same law, it is said, which prescribes the 'Cherem' prohibits Moloch worship. This objection, if it were not contradictory, might be met by proof that the Hebrew law is not the well-reflected work of a single mind, but a digest of various and often conflicting materials." Vol. ii. p. 434.

Here, at last, we begin to breathe. He has uttered the word *proof*. We may now expect something like connected argument and legitimate evidence. Well, what is the first proof? "Moses could hardly have prohibited a rite which, despite the compiler's caution, appears to have been resorted to by himself, as well as by Samuel and David." That is, Moses could not have prohibited the Israelites from causing their children to pass through the fire to Moloch, because he himself, and Samuel, and David, were Moloch worshippers. Well, how does this last fact appear? Why, Moses was a Moloch worshipper because he commanded the worshippers of the golden calf to be slain; Samuel was a Moloch worshipper because he hewed Agag to pieces; and David was a Moloch worshipper because he allowed the sons of Saul to be hung in Gibeah!—therefore the Levitical Law is a clumsy digest of stupid forgeries! But this is not his only proof. He proceeds: "we *know* (?) that much [how much?] of the present Pentateuch was long extant *only* in tradition." Very good; if we *know* it, that is enough; but the question returns, *how* do we *know* it? To this he makes two answers. First, he cites Judges vi. 13; Ps. xliv. 1, and lxxviii. 3, 6. Now, it is perfectly astonishing that the author should refer to such passages as his vouchers, which simply speak of "what our fathers have

told us" of God's doings in Egypt and elsewhere; especially when the express commandment orally to teach children these things, than which indeed nothing could be more natural without express command,—is repeatedly and positively given; as in Ex. xii. 26, 27, and xiii. 14; Deut. vi. 7, and xi. 19. While, on the other hand, the appeal to tradition does prove one other thing sufficiently, namely, that the Mosaic history could not have been a fabrication of the Babylonish exiles, nor indeed any fabrication at all, as he afterwards alleges. But secondly, he asserts that "many of the enactments of the law can only be explained as a prospective provision for exigencies not existing at the date of its supposed origin." The force of this reason may not be immediately manifest; but if we will just assume, with the author, that no miracle, no prophecy, no revelation, is possible, its force will be immediately perceived, and we shall need no further arguments to prove that the Levitical Law was a forgery. He seems, however, not quite content with this reason himself; but proceeds to urge the stale suggestion that the subsequent ignorance and neglect of the law prove its non-existence; as though, by his own account, the records of that "ignorance and neglect" were not "digested" by the same hands which "digested" the books of the law; and as though the known consequences of that neglect all along, and especially the final catastrophe, being in fulfilment of express predictions and threatenings contained in the law, were not, to any mind free from the prepossessions of Mr. Mackay's, the most irrefragable confirmation of the authenticity and divine origin of the Pentateuch. But he finally winds up his argument with the unanswerable allegation, that "the better part, or at least better application, of the law is admitted to have been a late discovery, originating doubtless in the civilizing influences operating under the Jewish kings;" and he then cites, as proof of such admission, Isa. xxix. 13, and Jer. viii. 8. Now we have had some acquaintance with allegorizing interpretations, and double senses, and treble senses; but we humbly confess that it exceeds all our powers of ratiocination or divination, of permutation or combination, to extract from those passages any proof of the author's assertion. We will quote the English text entire.

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:" —

"How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain."

These things are written in Isaiah and Jeremiah; therefore the law of Moses is a forgery! The inference is certainly strong.

He proceeds to treat the later Hebrew religion as a "reformation of Jehovahism," — of the bloody and horrible Moloch worship practised by Abraham, Moses, Samuel, and David; forgetting that he had just said, "the sanguinary principle sanctioned by the example of Abraham extends through the *whole* of the Hebrew *ritual* and *practice*."

"The prophets," says he, "represent their lessons as the old law, the true statutes and judgments of Jehovah, while impliedly exhibiting the falsehood of their own assertions. . . . The 'book of the law,' supposed to have been found in the temple by the high priest, was *probably* only a brief exposition of prophetic morality in a sententious form, accompanied with corresponding changes of ceremonial, especially of the passover. *Up to* this epoch of Josiah's reign, idolatry had been the established religion."

Here is a sufficiently positive statement. The oracle having spoken, we may now be assured that, all the way from Abraham to Josiah, idolatry had been the established religion among the Hebrews. If we are asked how we know this, we can only answer, Mr. Mackay says so, or perhaps, "Ghillany argues plausibly," or "the German critics" have so decided. If we inquire by what ancient documents or modern revelations this has been ascertained, we may answer our own question. It does not appear even how they have found out there ever were such men as Abraham, and Samuel, and David, and the ancient Hebrews; although, it is true, we have certain professedly ancient writings which tell us the history of that people. But these writings, though neither he nor the German critics can trace them, historically and by positive evidence, to any other origin than that which they

claim on the face of them, both he and they have agreed, on *a priori* grounds, or by virtue of their own infallibility, to hold as false and fabulous. Yet they can easily believe in the "probable" existence of a book which no man has ever seen, and of which not a fragment remains; and besides, they know, or as good as know, its contents. Why was not this "book of the law," if such as our author describes it, preserved? Surely it might as well have come down to us as any other book of the age of Josiah; and he does not pretend to deny that Hebrew books as old as that have come down to us? Quite a different "book of the law" *has* come down to us, and we know its contents; and we find them altogether consistent with the account of the discovery of a "book" in Josiah's reign; and, moreover, we find it written in an antique style of language and thought which could not have been the product of that, or of any subsequent, age. But of the existence of that other sort of "book," at any time, we find no evidence but in the imagination of modern infidels.

But our author says, that, after the return from Babylon, "the reformers began to make collections of the ancient Scriptures, remodelling them on their own views; the great object of the compilers being to give reform the sanction of antiquity; to throw back the better religion of the present to the days of Moses. Truth of fact was remorselessly sacrificed to truth of principle." Surely Mr. Mackay was present at this remodelling operation; he remembers so clearly how it was all managed, and withal has himself profited so largely by the example; or he has seen the ancient documents which underwent this operation, and will before long give them to an impatient public in their original, authentic form; or, at least, he has the positive evidence of some eye-witnesses to the historical fact of such an operation; and, if so, the direct reproduction of their testimony would certainly be more satisfactory, to most of those cautious believers in a divine revelation who are in the habit of demanding some evidence to rest their faith upon, than his mere unsupported assertion. We wait for the testimony.

But he goes on to say, that, as it seems, by those very "remodelling reformers" who returned from the Babylonish

captivity, "it began to be perceived that Abraham's sacrifice was a suggestion of the devil, and that the ancient Hebrew God could not have been the Father of Jesus of Nazareth. Far different had been the Jewish records if edited by the idolatrous majority." Very likely; or, if edited by Mr. Mackay, he might have added; but what does that prove?

He next proceeds to indorse the blasphemies of such heretics as Cerdon and Marcion; who treated the Mosaic "demiurgus" as the impersonation of the evil principle, and unhesitatingly consigned all the pious adherents of the ancient "Cosmocrator," including Abel, Enoch, Noah, &c., to Tartarus. And, in his last chapter, he apparently adopts all the complicated and interminable fantastic theories and mad ravings of the Ebionites and Gnostics, openly ranking them as immeasurably superior to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, in elevation of thought, spirituality of conception, and purity of moral principle.

"The Hebrew reform," he asserts, "is emphatically connected with the *passover*. This festival was notoriously in relation with the sacrificial infanticide of the Hebrews, as also with the practice of presenting every first born male child before Jehovah, afterwards substituted for the earlier revolting rite." "Jehovah proved his people as he 'tempted' or 'proved' their most venerated ancestor, and it was at the price of his own 'sons and daughters' that he turned his merciless sword against their enemies."

That is to say, in plain English, the Israelites offered their own first-born as a sacrifice to Jehovah-Moloch, that they might be delivered from their Egyptian bondage; and afterwards celebrated this *Passover* by a similar annual immolation. But, as the history is expressly against this novel view, to give it for the present no harsher epithet, what evidence does Mr. Mackay adduce? He asserts, in the first place, but without pretending the least shadow of evidence, that the "redemption clause," (Exod. xiii. 13, 15,) is an interpolation; and by the same rule he might prove that atheism is the express doctrine of the Scriptures; for, by declaring the clause, "The fool hath said in his heart," to be an interpolation, he will make the 53d Psalm roundly assert, "There is no God." But, in the second place, in proof of this particular his-

torical event of "sacrificial infanticide," he returns to his general charge, "the immolation of human victims down to a late period unquestionably formed a part, and no unimportant one, of Jehovah's ritual;" and in proof of this "unquestionable" fact, he has the effrontery to cite, as his sole evidences, Mic. vi. 7, Isa. i. 15, and 2 Sam. xxi. 9. The first passage contains the question, "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" The second declares to the apostate and hypocritical Jews, "Your hands are full of blood." And the last — a citation which has grown quite threadbare from Mr. Mackay's reiterations — contains a statement of the execution of the sons of Saul at Gibeah; an execution which was peremptorily demanded by the vindictive Gibeonites, and which was in fulfilment of God's threatening against the house of Saul. And, in view of such proofs as these, we feel fully authorized to declare, that the alleged "unquestionable" fact of Mr. Mackay is as baseless and as base a fabrication and falsehood as any respectable man ever dared to utter and set his name to.

But, besides this "unquestionable" fact, he has yet another proof of the "sacrificial infanticide," the grand Moloch immolation of the Hebrews, on coming out of Egypt. "The conjecture," he avers, — "the *conjecture*" of a "*notorious*" fact! — "is confirmed by Ezekiel, who, in a remarkable passage, Ez. xx. 25, asserting Moloch worship to have been an institution authorized by Jehovah in order to punish his people, alludes to the old passover rite as having formed part of that worship," &c. Now the passage in Ezekiel runs thus, —

"Because they had not executed *my* judgments, but had despised *my* statutes, and had polluted *my* sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.

"Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live;

"And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that *they* caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the Lord."

The plain and obvious meaning of which, and the only meaning consistent with the context and with the

whole Biblical history, is this ; — Inasmuch as they would not obey *my* laws, but went back to the idolatry of their fathers, I also gave them up to carry out this idolatry to its most destructive and loathsome results, to follow their own inventions, and be filled with their own devices. As when Jehovah says further, at verse 39, “Go ye, serve ye every one his idols, hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me ; but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts and with your idols.” Will Mr. Mackay interpret this as a solemn command to practise idolatry, and utterly to abandon the worship of Jehovah, because the verb is in the imperative mood ? Why, then, should he insist upon the manifestly metaphorical “I gave them,” equivalent to “I left, or gave them up, to obey ;” and upon this narrow basis, proceed to build his whole structure of horrible blasphemy ? The meaning which we have indicated above is undeniably possible, and indeed a very natural one according to Hebrew usage, and is abundantly confirmed by the whole context, — *Vid.* verses 7 and 8, 12 and 13, 18 – 21, and especially 30 and 31, — as well as by many passages parallel to these in other parts of the Bible. Why, then, *must* we receive Mr. Mackay’s interpretation, with all its loathsome consequences ? Yet he proceeds to say, —

“We are then *authorized by scripture testimony*, as well as collateral evidence, such as the custom of executing malefactors on the Passover, [as this is the only “collateral evidence” he adduces, we may presume it to be the strongest, if not the only, evidence of the kind which he could bring ; but, admitting this to be a fact, what does it prove ? and how far it is a fact remains questionable, especially as the custom in the time of the Romans is stated to have been, not to execute malefactors on this feast, but to release one *prisoner* who should be desired by the people. But he proceeds,] we are authorized to presume that the new Passover replaced the old Moloch rite, in which, if analogy may be a basis for conjecture, [a sure ground to go upon, truly, in order to reach such outrageous and impious conclusions,] if *analogy may be a basis for conjecture*, a man or child was hung or rather crucified, as an offering ‘before the Lord’ during the last hours of the departing year, and after being suspended till sunset, was then taken down, the blood poured out upon unleavened cakes, which, with portions of the flesh, were eaten by the communicants, and the remainder burnt in the furnace fire of

'Moloch,' the still continuing title of Jehovah, in Paschal invocations."

The rest of the "*conjecture based upon analogy*" may pass for what it is worth; but as to the "invocation," it has always been understood without offence by Jehovah's worshippers that he is *King*. So much, and no more, is meant by the alleged form of address.

It ought to be here acknowledged, to Mr. Mackay's credit, that he does not seem himself to have invented this theory of a Jehovah-Moloch, and an infanticide-Passover, with all its abominable and disgusting details; but to have borrowed it entire from his right-hand man, Ghillany, who "reasons plausibly." Indeed, we can hardly conceive it possible that such a theory could have been invented by any English mind. Alas, that any English mind should be ready to embrace it! As for Ghillany, some may think fit to charge us with groping in superstitious darkness and perversely shunning the light of the modern "manifestation," when we confess that we have not waded through five or six hundred pages of the atheism, blasphemy, and loathsome imaginations of such "plausible reasoning." Nevertheless, we freely make the confession. Mr. Mackay's own book is quite enough for one year's dose.

Mr. Mackay pursues his "Progress" to the final development of the Hebrew religion in Christianity. He talks of the "presumed resurrection" of Jesus, and thinks "he did not himself at first understand the catholicity of his own mission." He is of opinion that "Christianity, by its atonement scheme, betrayed its own dignity, and abandoned for a fanciful notion a prolific truth." As to the question whether Jesus was a *suicide*, he vibrates in uncertainty, inclining first to one side and then to the other. (See pp. 344, 394, 395, vol. ii.) At last, he seems to make up his mind, on the whole, in the negative.

"Jesus," he says, "experienced the bitter disappointment of an enthusiastic philanthropist whose aims and motives have been misconstrued and depreciated. His agony was not an unmanly fear of death, but distress at the utter failure of his most cherished hopes, and the impossibility of his living except as an apostate without universal offence and constant persecution. It may be that at an earlier period he imagined that his kingdom in its loftiest meaning [how came he to think of such a meaning? Has it

been fulfilled?] was to be quickly realized to the eye either in a natural or supernatural manner. But the expectation, if ever formed, was soon dispelled. At this conjuncture, it remained only that, since his Messianic plan had for the present failed both temporally and spiritually, he should himself become a sacrifice for his cause, not merely in order to prove his sincerity, but as an appeal to the future world against the grossness and hardheartedness of this." Therefore he died.

"In short, we cannot admit the atonement theory to have been authorized by Jesus as part of his religion. If human waywardness had deliberately proposed to cast a slur on the sublime act of self-devotion, which closed the career of Jesus, the object could scarcely have been more effectually attained than by construing it as an enchantment or spell, through which the real mental change he died to promote might be superseded by a mere profession of paradoxical belief."

Such is, in his view, "the atonement theory;" and yet he thinks that it was inculcated by St. Paul, though not by Jesus himself. He further objects to the "theory" which he has thus caricatured, that, —

"Apart from a firm trust in the general beneficence of the Creator, which needs not to be restored, since it never was withdrawn, can this transcendental presumption [admitted to have been taught by St. Paul,] which arrogantly anticipates the distant goal of existence, be a safe creed for an imperfect, progressive being? It has practically given to Christianity a character, which, though it have an ill sound, it would be vain as well as dishonest to dissemble, that of a religion of Moloch."

Moloch seems to be a great favorite with our author. Not only was Judaism a religion of Moloch, but Christianity is a religion of Moloch. Not only was Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of Moses, Samuel and David, no other than Moloch; but the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as recognized by himself, (for he claimed the God of Abraham as his Father,) and by St. Paul, and by the Church Catholic to this day, is Moloch still!

For the many expressions and theories of Mr. Mackay's book, which are so abhorrent to a Christian ear, and which we have felt compelled from time to time to characterize as "impious," "blasphemous," &c., but without ever finding any epithet sufficiently strong to express fully the intensity of our feelings and convictions, — he ought per-

haps to have the benefit of one general excuse ; namely, that he deals with subjective notions, with conceptions of Deity, and not with the Deity himself ; indeed, that his general theory is purely subjective, and therefore essentially atheistic ; for, at least, he would hold that, when we speak of God, we know not what we say, nor whereof we affirm, as regards the truth of objective reality. But all this will not excuse his so wantonly shocking and outraging, in the bosom of a Christian country, the most sacred feelings of the Christian world.

We cannot follow him through his "speculative Christianity." Here he is at liberty to indulge in what extravagances and fancies he will ; and he seems to have used this liberty with a full consciousness of possessing it. Suffice it to say, as illustrations of his tact in this department, that he makes St. Paul a Gnostic, and St. John an Emanationist and a Docetes ; holds Marcion and the Clementina as higher authority than the Old Testament Scriptures ; and concludes with the anticipation that the title of "Saints" will one day be given to such philosophers as himself.

Such is the latest "manifestation to philosophy." We would boldly place it, in its complete and naked beauty, side by side with the system of Christianity, and bid men make their selection.

Beginning with the atheistic denial of a personal God, and, of course, assuming all miracle and all revelation to be impossible, this "manifestation" proceeds to excise this and that portion of the Bible as an interpolation, and to disparage and treat with contempt the entire Old Testament ; then, resolving the wonderful histories of the New Testament into mythical fables, and scouting the peculiar doctrines of Christianity as puerile and superstitious, it ends with degrading Jesus himself to an impostor or a disappointed enthusiast.

Christianity, on the other hand, proving and accepting the objective existence of a personal, living God, admits the possibility, and the probability, and, on sufficient and unanswerable evidence, the actual fact, of miracle and divine revelation. It then proceeds upon the basis of such a revelation thus established ; and, by receiving certain mysterious doctrines relating to the person and office of

Jesus Christ, and making him the central idea and object of divine truth, of human history and human destiny, it finds all the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments concentrating and harmonizing in him into one glorious, beautiful, and perfect system ; — a system which satisfies the religious and rational nature, the moral and spiritual wants of man, elevating and ennobling his whole being by the purifying influences of its holy doctrines and heavenly hopes.

Here are the two systems, then ; and again we say, let men choose. Let them fully understand both systems, in their principles, their process, and their results,—the Infidel system as well as the Christian, and the Christian system as well as the Infidel ; let them see each in its proper character and full development ; and we have no fears for the result. We have to thank Mr. Mackay for having so completely stripped off the mask from the infidel tendencies of the age, which have been enabled to do their poisonous and destructive work only by virtue of the friendly, angelic disguises which they have cunningly assumed. His book may do some harm ; but only — if harm it can be called — by completing the work of corruption in the case of those who were not only predisposed to the infidel malady, but already so far gone as to be beyond all human hope of recovery.

Not only have we no fears for the truth, but we have no misgivings about it, no wishes against it. Whatever it is, wherever it is, and whoever has it, let it prevail, we say, with all our hearts ; and prevail it surely will, though how long the struggle may last, man knoweth not. Truth never changes and never dies. Truth is one, identical, eternal ; but falsehood and errors are manifold, multiform, ever-changing, individually transient, but never yet dying without heirs.

That Christianity, its facts and its faith, should be assailed, is no new thing. It has had its struggle with Judaism and Gnosticism, with Pagan philosophy and Pagan corruptions, with rationalism and superstition, with illumination and ignorance, with physics and metaphysics, with transcendentalism, skepticism, mysticism, Pantheism, Atheism. Still it survives. Still its pure and holy fountains pour forth the clear waters of life for the

healing of the nations. It has sustained itself, and will sustain itself, against the mighty hosts of its open and malignant foes, and against the yet greater malignity of those hypocritical friends, who, with patronizing insults and insidious flatteries, have condescended to correct or excuse its alleged errors, to soften down or explain away the so-called grossness of its peculiarities, to emasculate its character;—in short, to show that, when interpreted after a certain sort, it is not such a silly, wretched thing after all, but that the instructions of Jesus of Nazareth, at least, may be brought into harmony with the latest “manifestation to philosophy.” Mr. Mackay combines both these classes in one grand impersonation. From some passages in his work, it would seem he claims to be a Christian. But if a man who believes that the progress of the intellect in its religious development has been from Pantheism through Polytheism to Monotheism, and yet that the idea of a personal God is puerile; who declares all acts of worship to be extravaganzas, and prayer, though recommended by Christ’s own example and enjoined by his express precepts, to be a degrading, enervating act of unmanly weakness and indolence; who holds a belief in miracles, though professedly wrought by Jesus himself, to be in this enlightened age “blasphemous,” and the professed miracles themselves attributable to Beelzebub rather than to God, and all prophecy or divine revelation to be an impossibility and an absurdity; who identifies Jehovah with Moloch, and denies that Jesus was, what he certainly professed to be, the Christ, the Son of the living God; who quietly assumes the histories and facts of the New Testament to be myths or “cunningly-devised fables,” and its peculiar doctrines to be superstitious abortions;—if such a man is a Christian, then we have only to say, that, of all religionists on earth, Pagans, Mohammedans, Pantheists, and Atheists, inclusive, those who have usually called themselves Christians have the least claim to the title which they assume.

We have said we have no fears for the truth. We will add, we have no fears for Christianity, which, we doubt not, is the truth. As long as the instinctive belief in God, written on the human heart, remains unerased;—and, though it may be obscured, it never can be erased, it

is indelible, wrought into the very fibre and texture and life of man's being ; — as long as man remains capable of soberly appreciating the force and value of evidence ; and as long as his moral and spiritual wants, his sense of dependence, his consciousness of sin and alienation, his longing for redemption and reconciliation, his aspirations after holiness and immortality, remain ; so long Christianity must remain, — remain to give consolation to affliction, peace to the conscience, a sure anchor to man's highest hopes ; remain to raise the degraded, to purify the corrupt, to encourage the fallen, as well as always to keep a loftier goal before the eyes of the most advanced in moral progress, the foremost in the spiritual race ; remain to reform and regenerate human life and human society by diffusing its pure and gentle spirit of self-denial and benevolence, and adding to the natural and ordinary restraints from wrong and motives to duty, the sanctions of religious truth and future retribution.

ART. II. — *Five Years in an English University.* By CHARLES ASTOR BRISTED, late Foundation Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. New York : G. P. Putnam. 1852. 2 vols. 12mo.

MR. BRISTED'S book contains an intolerable amount of flippancy, slang, and self-conceit. But it also affords much information upon a very interesting topic, — information which would be sought in vain elsewhere. It gives a full and clear account of the practical operation of the English University system, bringing out into strongest relief those points in which it differs most from the plan of education adopted in our American Colleges, and thereby enabling the reader to judge of the merits and deficiencies of both. No one ever enjoyed more favorable opportunities for making comparisons between the two schemes of University education. Of English descent by his father's side, though an American by birth, enjoying a competency or even a superfluity of wealth, half a dandy and half a